

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

ENGLISH NATION.

Saturday, April 13. 1706.

LET no Man take Exceptions here at my Retrospect of past Affairs, and think it unmentionable to look back ; 'tis true, they are Old Sores, and I have all along avoided the unpleasant Task, of calling to Mind the Miscarriage, which have already been covered with Blushes, and which Charity calls out to conceal.

But the subsequent Transactions of the same Gentlemen have made it necessary, and who can help the Unhappy force put upon us by the Party ? The preposterous Cry of the Churches Danger, was built on this Foundation ; and I can never give a Compleat History of that *Noise about Nothing* if I do not let the World into this part of the Secret, that the whole Clamour of the Danger of the Church, was raised upon the loss of their Tacking, the Occa-

sional Bill, and the Government appearing directly against their Designs, declaring them Dangerous and Unpeaceable ; of which in its Order.

I had not reviv'd a Discourse of the Tacking Project, had I not one or two Observations to make on it as to the Design, which are something New to the generality of the People, and as it is a worn-out Subject, I shall say the less to it ; nor had I mention'd it here, but as in forming an Introduction to the State of the Nation, I could not Compleat the Abridgment of things past, without it. My Observations are two,

1. That the design of the Tack was not *theirs who were for it.*
2. That they never expected it *shou'd pass* either the Lords or the Queen.

First,

First, It was not their own thought, *this* *Have* was not of their own finding, she was certainly started by some Old Gamesters, who had a mind to spoil their Sport, and who knew their Hounds were not speedy enough to make it out.

Who it was Noos'd them thus, and drew them into the Snare, perhaps is more easie than convenient to Describe ; but their general hatred of some Men, who had not a few times formerly outwitted them, makes it easie to see, that they knew the Truth of it themselves, nor indeed can I say a kinder thing of the Tackers, than that they were drawn into this matter by some that were too Cunning for them ; for if I would defend their Sence, and make it an Act of Premeditation, their Wits will be supported at the Expence of their Reputation, and they must pass for something so much more Scandalous than a Fool, that the Exchange will be greatly to their Disadvantage.

Had they told Noses, had they known the strength of their Party, had they been able to Calculate Persons and things, they could never have been so deluded ; it was certainly the Hand of *Joab* was in this thing, they were blinded with improbable Schemes, and they were made believe worse Absurdities, than ever *Don Quixot* Entertain'd in pursuit of his Knight Errantry upon the Windmill.

Secondly, But to to wave the due Satyr upon these Gentlemens Misfortunes, when they had entertain'd the thing, and undertaken its Mannagement, what could be their Design ? There is hardly a Man among them in his Wits, that will now pretend they did so much as expect it would pass either the House of Peers or the Queen, at least I never met with one of them that would pretend to it.

They could not expect it should pass the House of Lords, because their Lordships had made it a standing Order of their House long before, that they would never receive or pass any such thing as a Bill Tack'd to any Money Bill, of this these Gentlemen could not be Ignorant.

2. They could not expect Her Majesty should pass it, because the Queen had fre-

quently Passed her Royal given to preserve the Toleration, which their own Consciences could not but inform them, was struck at by this Design.

And this Observation brings me back to the real Design of that Project, which to me appears plainly not to be the obtaining the Bill as above, but the making their Interest seem formidable, and the putting the Negative upon the House of Lords.

What the Consequences would always be, of appearing Superiour in the House of Commons, I need not suggest to any, that knows of what use it is to the Government ; especially now, under the Embarrassment of a Chargeable War, to have a Majority ready in that House, whose Concern for the Publick should always encline them to Answer the stated Emergencies, and raise the necessary Funds, for the Prosecution of the War, and support of the Confederacy ?

Had then this Party been strong enough in the House, to have insisted upon any thing, though never so Fatal, and retarded the Supplies to Answer an End, they could not doubt but the Government would Sacrifice any Party of Men, or any Cause to the Necessity of Money.

And here appear'd, (1.) their Folly ; (2.) their Knavery. I begin with the last.

(1.) *Their Knavery*, To form a design of forcing the Queen to break her word for want of Money ; in which they must first show their own Dishonesty in desiring it ; and *secondly*, some want of Manners in, suggesting Her Majesty would do so, if she was straightned.

(2.) *Their Folly*, That they did not know the Strength of their own Party, and that having laid this Black Scheme, they could not foresee, that they should be baulk'd and lose it even in their own House ; and that losing it there would inevitably blow up the whole Design. and instead of showing them a strong and formidable Party, discover'd them to be what they really are ; Betray'd them as a weak and Contemptible Party, that if they had any thing on the Anvil, had neither Policy to manage it, nor Strength to carry it on.

Hinc ille Lacryme! From this Temerity they may Date their Ruine, and the Overthrow of the whole Party and Design; for upon the failing of this Project, follow'd the Court-Revolution, of which we are next to speak, and the Heads of this warm Faction came to be laid by of Course, as useless and Dangerous.

I believe I have given a true, tho' perhaps not a perfect Scheme of this Affair; I know some People Suggest, that these People were not without Hopes, that the Queen would be possess'd with their Notions, that this *Act was not a Breach of the Toleration*; and some of their Authors went so high, as to say it was entirely consistent with it, only put some Restraint upon the Dissenters, and curb'd their Exorbitancies — But Her Majesty, that knew not what it was to *prevaricate*, and meant always what she said, as well as spoke what she meant, was not so easily brought to *double upon her Subjects*, and therefore to stop effectually so Vile a Suggestion, barr'd the Door against all Equivocal Speeches, by adding the

Word INVOLABLY to her last Assurances of Maintaining the Toleration.

'Tis really hard, that Subjects should push thus at the Honour of their Sovereign, and force them to so many Repetitions and Explanations of Meanings, never giving over the pursuit of a hated Method of Imposing upon them, so long as there is the least Breach or Gap to creep out at; as if Princes should be understood doubtfully in Speeches of such Moment, and as if when the Queen had said before, that she would Maintain the Toleration, Her Majesty should mean *only some part of it*, or by Maintaining should mean an *Imperfect Maintaining it*, which had been just nothing at all.

As if when Her Majesty had promised before, that she would Maintain the Toleration, the *Dissenters* did not Rely upon its being Maintain'd INVOLABLY; but Her Majesty has dash'd all their hopes now, by adding the Word INVOLABLY her self; of which hereafter.

MISCELLANEA.

AS there are some Gentlemen besides the protest Enemies of this Paper, who search very diligently for any Slip or Mistake of its Author, who never yet pretended to be infallible; so I am told, that some, who at the same time allow the Notice given about the Taxing the Dissenting Ministers, to be both a useful and reasonable thing, and calculated for their Service, as well as to do Justice, yet throw Dirt at the Author, because they say the Account in his Letters does not exactly correspond in Fact with the Matter, as it really was, relating to the Gentleman that was unjustly Taxed.

In this therefore, and to clear my self of any willful Error, or of adding any Circumstance to Embellish the Story, a thing I always industriously avoid, I offer a few Notes.

1st. The Letter which I have had by me so long time, I am ready to produce, and the Name of its Author, of whom perhaps I need not be ashamed.

2^{dly}. What part soever of the Letter may not conform to Fact, and which these unwary Gentlemen would find fault with; 'tis certainly true,

1. That the Minister was Tax'd, and in Spight of all Endeavours paid the Tax.

2. That by the Law he was not at all oblig'd to pay, and ought not to have been Tax'd. — Now if every Word of the Circumstances does not hit, whether he went in a Car or a Coach, whether the Dialogue between him and the Justice be exactly related, or whether he really went to the Justice or no, since I neither added nor diminished from my Relator, and the Substance is Truth in Fact, which I am ready to

to prove, I hope these Gentlemen's Nicety is more unjustifiable than my Liberty.

As to the latter part of the Story, I stand by it as Truth of Fact, and have an Author for it I can depend on; and farther assure the World, that wherever these Gentlemen in the Country are thus treated, and would but pursue the same Method, they would obtain the same Redress.

'Tis hard Gentlemen will not permit me the Liberty which they every Day take with me: Suppose, I had asserted without Ground, which however I have not.

If I do them no Service, since I sincerely endeavour it, they ought to accept that Endeavour; if I do them any, I ask them nothing for it; 'tis hard they should Treat the *Voluntary Servant*, as the hir'd; and be ever finding fault with the Man, that at least throws in his Mite of Assistance, to the cause of Truth and Liberty, and asks them neither Thanks nor Reward.

'Tis plain there has been an Abuse; if my Writing that Account prevents but one poor Family paying four or five Pounds, out of the small Pittance of 30 *l. per Ann.* to Maintain a Wife, and five or six Children with — Will any Man tell me, the Paper has done no good? Now this and much more Effect, I have the Satisfaction to see it has already had, and I doubt not will have a farther to many an honest Man; let the Complainer do as much Service with the same *unexpecting good-Will*, and he that hinders him will be much to blame.

Let not those that find me go no farther here, in the subject of the last, think 'tis for want of Matter; I am not apt to baulk a Truth, let it reach never so high, and profess my self able to follow the Party with the black Charge, of Slander and False speaking, *to give it as good Words as I can*, into the Pulpit, the Press, the Academy, the Bar, and the Bench; nay, even to the Counsel, P...t, and Convocation.

But I hear the Gentleman is in some Trouble, and I shall not encrease it; God send him a good Deliverance, from all his Voluntary Ennarrations. When he shall think fit to bear up these Charges, he shall not fail to have his Conquests Acknowledg'd by me, and

my Subjection Signifi'd, by laying down this Paper, and all other Defences of Low Church or Dissenters, according to my Promise; and till he does, he must not expect me to follow him into all his Laborious Mazes of Rallery, in which he is more than a Match for me since he dares Attack, even the Secretary of State.

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